



Department of State

TELEGRAM

10 APR 1970

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SECRET 346

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ACTION SS-45

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /1

O 101200Z APR 70
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5045

S E C R E T BANGKOK 4321

EXDIS

FOR SECRETARY GREEN FROM AMBASSADOR UNGER

SUBJECT: SYMINGTON HEARINGS: THAILAND TRANSCRIPT

REF: A. STATE 051274
B. STATE 051275
C. STATE 051280

Cable Secretariat Routing:
EXDIS Background Use Only:
FILE, CS/RF, DCI (Orig),
D/DCI, DDP, SDO, D/OCI,
D/ONE, C/IFF, [REDACTED]

EXDIS NINE ADD [REDACTED] 25X1A
OCC [REDACTED]

1. I AM MOST GRATEFUL FOR REFTELS. I AGREE WITH YOU THAT THE RTG WOULD NOT WANT AT THIS TIME TO CALL ATTENTION TO ITS ROLE IN LAOS AND I APPRECIATE GREATLY THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS THAT HAVE HAD TO BE MADE IN WASHINGTON ON THIS SUBJECT. THE DECLASSIFICATIONS PROPOSED I HOPE AND THINK WE CAN LIVE WITH. WITH ONE EXCEPTION THEY ALL CONFORM TO YOUR DESCRIPTION IN PARA 1, REF B. THE EXCEPTION IS FOUND ON PAGE 418. I DO BELIEVE THAT THIS GOES BEYOND PUTTING ON THE RECORD THE FACT THAT WE CONDUCT AIR OPERATIONS IN AND OVER LAOS FROM THAI BASES. THIS PARTICULAR EXCHANGE WITH GENERAL PETIT PINPOINTS SPECIFIC HELICOPTER ASSETS AT A SPECIFIC THAI BASE, THE NUMBER OF HOURS THEY FLY AND STATES THEY RESPOND TO CALLS FROM THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE. THIS, I BELIEVE, WOULD BE OUR FIRST PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HELICOPTER REPEAT HELICOPTER OPERATIONS OUT OF THAILAND INTO LAOS (BEYOND, PERHAPS, SAR). OTHER INFORMATION IN THE TRANSCRIPT WHICH YOU PROPOSE TO NOW DECLASSIFY SIMPLY ADDS SOME DETAIL TO THE PRESIDENT'S SUMMARY OF US AIR OPERATIONS IN LAOS. THIS, HOWEVER, WOULD ADD A NEW AND VOLATILE ITEM FOR THE PRESS TO DIG INTO AND I FEEL SURE WOULD ALSO IRRITATE THE RTG. FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE ASSURED THE RTG OVER THE YEARS THAT AIRCRAFT MISSIONS ARE FLOWN FROM THAI BASES WITH MY KNOWLEDGE AND APPROVAL. GENERAL



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PETIT'S REFERENCE TO "THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE"
COULD LEAD THE RTG TO QUESTION THIS.

2. I REALIZE THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN GOING BACK TO THE
COMMITTEE ON THIS. I AM MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THE EFFORTS YOU
MADE IN RESPONSE TO MY 3501 OF LAST MONTH. HOWEVER, THIS SUGGESTED
DELETION CANNOT BE SAID TO AFFECT THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW;
I THINK IT WOULD EASE OUR DIFFICULTIES CONSIDERABLY WITH THE
RTG WERE THIS PASSAGE NOT TO APPEAR. I HOPE THAT YOU CAN MEET
THIS REQUEST.

